

Well, Mr. Speaker, three years later, the FCC has failed to act and we need to move forward. Let us get the FCC to act today. This bill will provide a great nudge. The Stearns-Frost-Oxley bill will revise the duopoly rules to allow UHF-VHF ownership combinations in the same local market and to allow UHF-VHF combinations in separate local markets that may have overlapping coverage contours, such as in the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore markets. This bill will also permanently grandfather all LMAs.

But, Mr. Speaker, within this bill, it still allows the FCC to have unusual powers. If the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commission that permitting such ownership, operation, or control will not significantly harm competition or will not significantly harm the preservation of the diversity of media voices in the television market, then it will allow them to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, many nations prevent American companies from owning any percentage of their domestic broadcast industry. We must institute reciprocity and this bill starts this process now. Our bill will allow only those nations that will allow reciprocal ownership arrangements for American companies or individuals to move into American markets.

So this legislation will fundamentally change the economic dynamics of the broadcast industry to continue its vibrant tradition. To provide reciprocity. To help broadcasters to eliminate duplicative efforts. To make them more competitive and decrease regulation. That, Mr. Speaker, is the purpose of the bill.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

May Your blessing, O God, be with all who seek to serve in public service as elected leaders or as associates, in government service or in private endeavor. You have called each person, O gracious God, to use the talents and gifts that are theirs in ways that promote peace in our world and right attitudes

and respect in our communities and neighborhoods. May not the words of understanding and reconciliation, of esteem and awareness, of freedom and liberty be the only words that we speak with our lips, but may those good words find home in our actions and in our hearts. May Your benediction, O God, be with those in public service and with every person now and evermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

NATIONAL TRIO DAY

(Mr. DICKEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DICKEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention the celebration of National TRIO Day this past Saturday, February 27. National TRIO Day was designated by concurrent resolution on February 24, 1986, by the 99th Congress. It is celebrated on the last Saturday of each February.

The TRIO program is a Federal program that works. Students volunteer their time to learn about how to better educate themselves, to become more gainfully employed. Employees of TRIO are there to help them and encourage them. This is for families that have income of under \$24,000.

We need more funds for this program so that we could fill more slots across the country. There are more people who want to get in the program than we have slots available.

One last thing, I would like to commend Lindsey Burkett of my hometown of Pine Bluff. She is in the Upward Bound program at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and is the 16-year-old daughter of Nadine Burkett and the late Ray Burkett. She is a junior honor student at Dollarway High School. I want to commend her for her work and TRIO for it also.

READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

(Mr. CUMMINGS asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Read Across America Day. The National Education Association, partnering with some of the Nation's leading literacy education and community groups, is calling for every child and every community in America to celebrate reading today.

Reading is critically important as a platform for future learning. As a father of a 4-year-old, I enjoy the positive emotional charge of our reading experience as she soaks in every word and picture. We are forming her pre-reading skills, and she will enter school prepared to read.

Unfortunately, there are thousands of children in America who do not have their parents reading to them. Responsible adults must fill this gap for the sake of all of our children.

It is important that this Congress do all that it can to support and further child development from the rural communities of the heartland to the inner city of Baltimore, my home district. Today is a perfect opportunity to help all of our children reach their full potential.

CUBAN TRIAL CONVENED AGAINST FOUR DISSIDENTS WITH NO CHARGES FILED

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, for 594 days, Cuban dissidents Vladimiro Roca, Marta Beatriz Roque, Felix Bonne, and Rene Gomez Manzano have been behind Fidel Castro's prison bars, with no charges filed against them, for disseminating the document entitled, "The Homeland Belongs to All of Us," that dares to speak of counterrevolutionary beliefs, such as freedom, democracy, and human rights.

Yesterday, the regime began a kangaroo court trial behind closed doors against these four brave freedom fighters who face even more jail time. The trial of these four dissidents comes only days after the regime imposed a new law that severely punishes those who promote anti-revolutionary information.

Foreign diplomats and reporters who had expressed an interest in being present at this show trial were summarily dismissed. Foreign observers are not even allowed less than two blocks from the building in which these mock trials are being held.

On the eve of this mockery of justice, dozens of Cuban independent journalists and other dissidents, who risk their lives in an attempt to inform the international community about the reality inside Cuba, were arbitrarily arrested to prevent them from reporting on the proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that the last tyrant of our hemisphere is not about to change his totalitarian nature.

RUSSIA IS USING U.S. MONEY TO BUILD MISSILES

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Uncle Sam gives billions to Russia. Russia builds missiles with our money. Russia then illegally dumps steel in America, destroying jobs in industry. Uncle Sam gives Russia more billions to stop the dumping.

Russia then takes this money and builds more missiles. This is no joke. The Pentagon says Russia has developed a new missile they call invincible because no system can stop it.

Beam me up here, ladies and gentlemen. Russian economy is so bad they cannot buy toilet paper, but they are building missiles threatening our freedom with our dollars. This is unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back all the bureaucrats who are sitting on their brains here in Washington, D.C.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY SOLD IN RETAIL BOOKSTORES

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, people would be astounded to learn in America that many public, commercial bookstores throughout the United States are allowed to sell child pornography. I am not talking about adult book stores.

I was shocked recently to learn that bookstores like Barnes and Noble and Borders are selling books that show young girls and boys completely nude in suggestive, erotic positions. These children are photographed alone or shown erotically entangled with other young children. Further, many of the captions for the pictures are sexually explicit.

Mr. Speaker, this is an outrage. Child pornography feeds the sick minds of child molesters who sexually prey on defenseless children who live in our neighborhoods.

What has the Clinton administration done to protect these children? They have turned a blind eye to some of the most offensive child pornography there is. The administration has not enforced Federal obscenity laws, after promising to make this a priority.

Please join me in calling on the administration to enforce our existing Federal obscenity laws.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to pass along some comments that my mother, Nancy Lampson, made to me after church just recently. She, like millions of other senior citizens, is worried about the future of Medicare and Social Security. She is afraid that it will not be there for me and my brothers and sisters.

My mother knows that saving Social Security and Medicare is not just good for retirement security for her. She knows it is also good for me, her grandchildren, and her great grandchildren.

Why? Because putting aside 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security and another 15 percent for Medicare will also reduce the national debt and reduce the billions of dollars we waste each year on interest payments. Winnowing down the national debt will be good for my mother's great grandchildren.

Currently, the United States of America spends nearly as much on interest payments as it does on national defense. If we wisely invest the surplus in Social Security and Medicare today, we can reduce our interest payments from 14 percent of the budget in 1999 to 2 percent in 2014.

Investing in Social Security and Medicare will not only reduce the debt but also will lower interest rates, boost the economic growth, and increase the financial security of working families. You do not have to be a Harvard economist to know that this makes good sense to the American people.

So, on behalf of my mother and the millions of Americans we represent, I urge all of you to invest in the present and the future by investing the budget surplus in Social Security and Medicare—it makes good sense for America.

OUR STUDENTS DESERVE THE BEST EDUCATION

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, as a former teacher, I understand the importance of a good education and the foundation it builds for our youth. Our schools, both public and private, must establish curricula designed to challenge students and to reward classroom successes. American students, parents, and teachers must maintain the highest level of quality in the field of education.

Achieving this goal is possible when educational guidelines are drawn by parents and local school districts. It takes about 18,000 Federal and State employees to manage 780 Federal education programs in 39 Federal agencies,

boards, and commissions at a cost of nearly \$100 billion annually.

It is thus not surprising that only approximately 70 cents of each dollar makes it directly to the classroom. We must do better. We must consolidate these programs and ensure that at least 95 percent of the funds are directed to the classrooms. Our students deserve the best possible education.

PUT OUR FINANCIAL HOUSE BACK IN ORDER

(Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment on the fiscal situation in which we find ourselves and the opportunity that we have.

For 25 years, on a bipartisan basis, this government has mismanaged its financial house, its financial matters. We have, after 25 years, the opportunity to make fundamental progress. We have the opportunity to restore the nearly \$700 billion that has been, quote-unquote, borrowed from the Social Security Trust Fund. We have the opportunity to put our fiscal house back in order. If we do that, it is not only good for the government fundamentally, it is good for the people of this country.

By reducing our interest payments, by reducing the demand on the credit market, we will do great things for the American people. The average cost of a home mortgage can be reduced by \$200 a month by adhering to the financial responsibility that we have the opportunity to pass this year in the Congress. I urge my colleagues, do it this year. Fix the financial situation. We have the opportunity. Do not let it lapse.

KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENT

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the other side to a pledge, a pledge that has been notably absent from the proposals of the other side of the aisle.

The Republican plan to protect and strengthen Social Security does not raise taxes, and it does not reduce benefits. The President's plan, however, leaves that option wide open. It would not take a rocket scientist or a fortune teller to figure out what that means.

The key issues for the current and future retirees is, will my retirement be secure and will Social Security remain a good deal? Social Security, unless dramatically reformed, fails on the first question.

As for the second, Social Security is a good deal for current retirees; but,